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## Costa Rica

**Post:** San Jose

### Costa Rica declares emergency in the banana sector

**Report Categories:**

Fresh Fruit

Pest/Disease Occurrences

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**Report Highlights:**

Increasing problems caused by scale insects has prompted the Costa Rican Ministry of Agriculture to declare a phytosanitary emergency in the banana sector. The Ministry will allow the importation of pesticide impregnated bags that cover the bananas to help reduce the population of insects.

**General Information:**

The State Phytosanitary Service (SFE) of Costa Rica's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock declared a national emergency in the banana sector due to increasing populations of two pests, the scale insects *Diaspis boisduvalii* and *Pseudococcus elisae*. The banana industry estimates that these insects are affecting 24,000 hectares. The damage is cosmetic, causing black spots on the fruit, but this is sufficient to lead packers to reject the fruit, thus causing significant economic harm.

Decree 38008-MAG, published the week of December 9, 2013, declares a state of emergency for one year, and allows the import and distribution of bags impregnated with pesticide to cover the bananas while they are growing. SFE is concerned that importing countries might restrict banana imports.

Costa Rican banana production is located on the Atlantic coast in the province of Limon. Annual export sales reached \$801 million in 2011 and \$815 million in 2012, with approximately 47% going to the EU and 44% going to the US.